

PUBLIC ACCESS ROOM NEWSLETTER

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Legislative Timetable

January

16th Opening Day.
22nd State-of-the-State Address.
24th One day recess.
25th Last day for introduction of bills.

February

15th First Lateral (House).
21st -27th Mandatory 5 day recess.

March

1st Filing deadline for First Decking.
4th One day recess
6th One day recess.
7th First Crossover.
13th Last day to intro substantive resolutions.
22nd Second Lateral.

April

5th Filing deadline for Second Decking.
8th One day recess.
10th One day recess.
11th Second Crossover.
Last day to Disagree.
16th One day recess.
18th Deadline for final form of constitutional amendments.
22nd Second Crossover for concurrent resolutions.
25th Last day to file non-fiscal bills to deck for Final Reading.
26th Last day to file fiscal bills to deck for Final Reading.
29th One day recess.

May

1st One day recess.
2nd Adjournment Sine Die.

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CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

April 11th marked Second Crossover for this Session. It was also the last day for the House of Representatives and the Senate to disagree on amendments to measures made by the non-originating chamber. If a House bill, for instance – HB3333 HD1, ‘crosses over’ to the Senate, is amended by a Senate committee and is issued a Senate draft, the bill is now denoted as HB3333 HD1 SD1. In this scenario, the House has not yet had a chance to consider the Senate’s changes to the bill. At Second Crossover, however, HB3333 HD1 SD1 goes back to the House where the Representatives can decide to ‘agree’ to the Senate’s changes. At this point, the bill is certified and transmitted to the Governor to be signed into law. If the House does *not* like what the Senate has done to the measure, they will ‘disagree’. Disagreement means that a compromise must be made between the House and the Senate drafts in order for the bill to pass out of the Legislature.

To engineer this compromise, the House and the Senate convene what is known as a ‘Conference Committee’. This Conference Committee is comprised of members of both chambers who have been appointed by the Senate President and the House Speaker and whose authority “shall be limited to resolving differences between the Senate and House drafts of a bill or resolution.” (2002 Conference Procedures – SAY/BUNDA)

Once the leadership of both chambers have agreed on the bills that they want to ‘disagree’ on, they can begin the process of appointing members to the Conference Committees (also called ‘Managers’ or ‘Conferees’). The chairs of a Conference Committee are usually the subject matter committee chairs for a given measure. For example, if you are tracking Civil Service Benefits legislation, your subject matter committee would be Labor (the first committees to hear the bill in their respective chambers). As a result, the House Chair for the Conference Committee is likely to be Representative Scott Saiki and the Chair for the Senate would probably be Senator Bob Nakata (both are Chairs for Labor in their respective chambers). Keep in



Senators Kanno and Kawamoto deliberate with Representative Hamakawa (with back facing)

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mind, however, that this is not a RULE but rather a general guideline. You can frequently find more than one Chair for a measure depending on the referral, or you may even find a Vice-Chair heading-up a Conference Committee.

With nearly 300 bills slated to go to Conference and only 2 weeks to address these measures, things move very quickly. The rule that mandates 48 hours' notice prior to a hearing is suspended and only 24 hours' notice is required. What frequently happens, though, is that a Conference Committee will issue a hearing notice for a 9:00 a.m. meeting but they will recess and reconvene throughout the day to accommodate the scheduling constraints of various committees and conference rooms, and to assemble a quorum.

The House and Senate have been inviting the public to submit testimony and supply information throughout the session. The period from Second Crossover (April 11th) to Final Decking (April 25th for non-fiscal bills and April 26th for fiscal ones), however, is an exception to this practice and no testimony for bills is accepted. By this point in the session, the legislators have gained as much information as possible from public input and are now crafting the final language and logistics of the bills themselves. As always, these hearings are open to the public - people are encouraged to observe the proceedings.

Conference Committee meetings are conducted by the Chairs of the committees and they have authority over the Conferees of their



Senator Hemmings listens carefully as Representatives Espero and Souki discuss matters.

respective chambers. If a Conference Committee is convened to consider a bill, a majority of the assigned conferees from both chambers must be present for a vote to be taken.

Since multiple co-chairs are allowed, a majority of Chairs for each chamber must also be in attendance. In order to compare and contrast the text and substance of bills, Conferees will use 'comparison sheets', which specifically site the differences in the language of the two drafts. The

comparison sheets will list the pages and lines of dissimilar verbiage in the drafts, which the Conferees will then refer to in their hearings. This tool is used to confine the efforts of the committee members to the points that have not been agreed to and eliminates the need to compare the drafts of the measures as a whole.

CAPITOL TV



Capitol TV will be broadcasting Conference Committee proceedings during this session. The intent is to provide the public with some insight into the process of Conference, an enigmatic and often misunderstood aspect of the legislature. These proceedings will be recorded and broadcast later in the day because of scheduling difficulties for live productions of this nature. For information on broadcast times, dates and channels, call the Public Access Room at (808) 587-0478.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A BILL PASSES OUT OF THE LEGISLATURE?

For bills presented ten or more days before the adjournment of session, the Governor has ten days to sign, veto or let the bill become law after the expiration of ten days.

For bills presented less than ten days before adjournment or after adjournment, the Governor has forty-five days to sign, veto or let the bill become law after the expiration of forty-five days.

The Governor may veto specific items in budget bills by striking out or reducing the amount for appropriation. All other bills must be vetoed as a whole.